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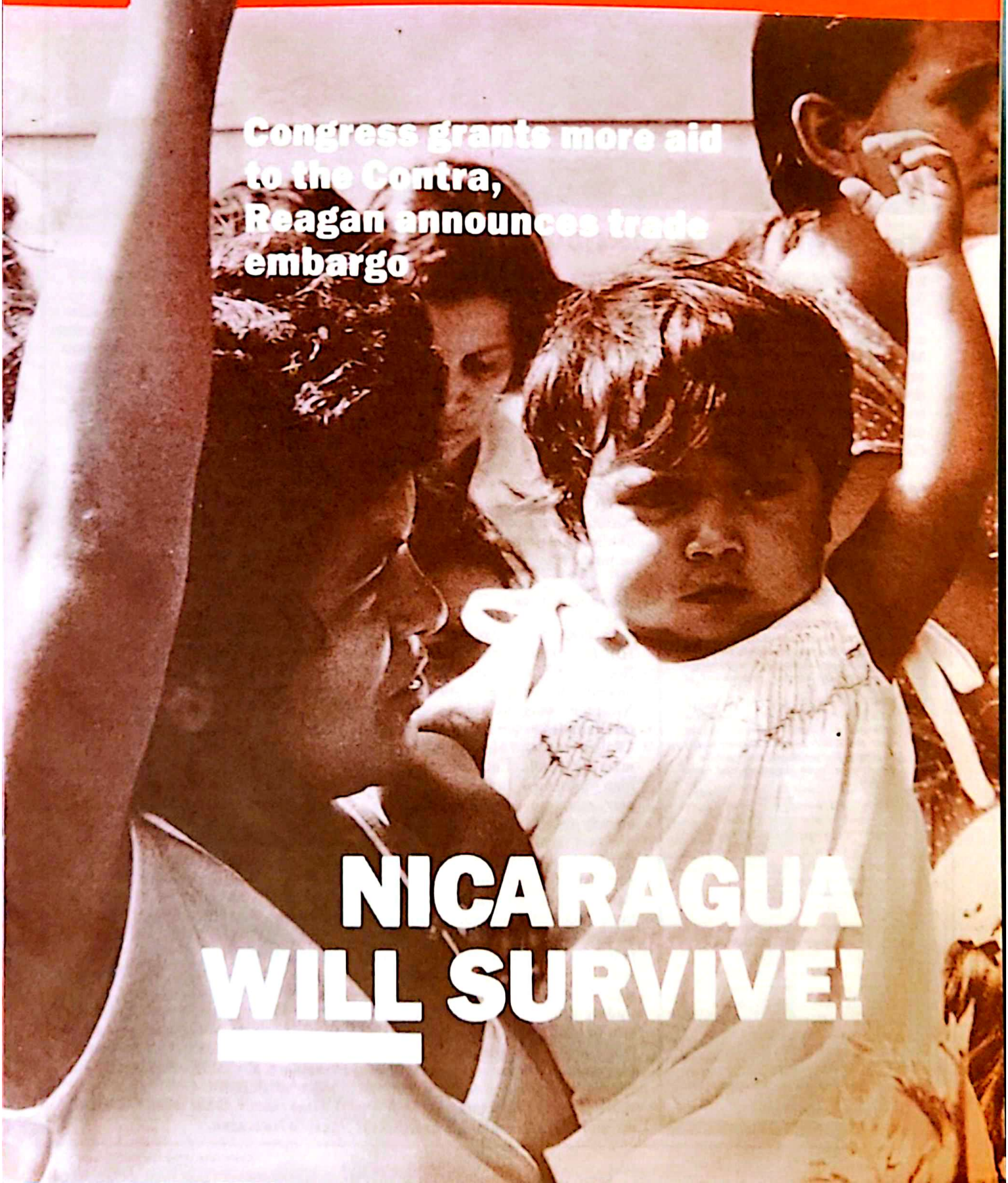


Congress grants more aid to the Contra, Reagan announces trade embargo

NICARAGUA WILL SURVIVE!

Market in Ciudad

Trade embargo: the noose tightens

REAGAN'S DECISION to impose a trade embargo against Nicaragua represents a further escalation of his undeclared war against the country. In Managua, where such a move has been expected for years, the FSLN's National Directorate responded defiantly: 'They want to starve us into submission. But they will never succeed. Our organized strength will win out'.

This is only the latest blow in an economic war Reagan has been waging for four years. In 1981, he froze Nicaraguan wheat credits in a blatant attempt to cause food riots. Since then, the United States has consistently blocked loans to Nicaragua by international agencies such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and has pressured its allies to follow suit. A leaked Foreign Office memo published by *The Observer* shows that the Thatcher government too has been operating a secret policy of opposing loans to Nicaragua on political grounds, while publicly claiming that it is for technical reasons.

Loan Sabotage

In 1983, Nicaragua applied to the IDB for a loan to renovate its fishing fleet. The United States insisted on imposing the unusual condition that Nicaragua must be able to guarantee fuel supplies to the fleet. Within days, CIA mercenaries blew up Nicaragua's main oil terminal at Corinto and the loan was denied. In the short term, the new embargo will hit Nicaragua's already fragile economy hard but in the long term it may help strengthen trade links with Western Europe, Latin America, the Socialist bloc and the Arab countries. When the United States slashed its sugar quota, Nicaragua quickly found new markets, mainly in Algeria and Libya. Already, since the embargo, Nicaragua has signed a deal with the EEC to sell the trading bloc bananas they previously sent to California. Spare parts for US-made machinery will be perhaps the biggest problem, especially for Nicaragua's large private sector. A spare parts industry has now been set up and in future old US machinery will be replaced by machinery from more reliable sources.

Reagan imposed the embargo after Congress had thrown out all proposals for aid to the contras — a major defeat for the president. He imposed the boycott with an executive order which does not need congressional approval — declaring that Nicaragua posed "an unusual and extraordinary threat to the security and foreign policy of the United States."

On 23 May, Secretary of State George Shultz said that by refusing even 'humanitarian' aid to the contras, Congress had brought the day nearer when 'We will be faced with the agonizing choice over the use of US combat troops'. Opposition to direct US intervention is the one thing guaranteed to unite Congress.

On 6 June, Senate passed Reagan's latest request for $38m in so-called 'humanitarian' aid — in reality logistical support — for the contras spread over two years.

Within days, the Democrat-controlled House of Representatives followed suit, although the amount voted for — $27m — was slightly less than that passed by Senate. Nevertheless, the message is the same: Congress is once again prepared to back President Reagan's war against Nicaragua. As Nicaraguan Foreign Minister D'Escoto observed, it is "a vote for death".

Democrat congressmen who had earlier voted against funds were reported to be "embarrassed" by Daniel Ortega's trip to Moscow as part of a 25-nation tour in search of economic assistance. Probably more significant is that administration officials are now talking openly about using US troops against Nicaragua.

NICARAGUA MUST SURVIVE APPEAL

"We condemn the move by President Reagan to impose an economic boycott against Nicaragua. Its aim is clearly to destabilize and ultimately overthrow the democratically elected government of Nicaragua.

This move can only set back the search for a peaceful, negotiated solution to the problems of Central America. We call upon the British people and government to provide immediate aid to Nicaragua in the form of cash donations and basic material aid."

Send donations now to "Nicaragua Must Survive Appeal" c/o N.S.C., 21 Compton Terrace, London N1 2UN.

Costa Rica loses its innocence

COSTA RICA enjoys the reputation of being Central America's most stable democracy and a country without an army. Both these are under threat from the US Administration which seeks to exploit divisions within Costa Rica and draw the country into its undeclared war against Nicaragua. Costa Rica's acceptance of a US offer to train a counterinsurgency battalion is the latest move in a worrying trend towards militarization.

US pressure on Costa Rica to militarize began in the wake of the Cuban revolution in 1959. In 1966, this resulted in Costa Rica joining CONDECA (Central American Defense Council — a military alliance with Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala) until public outcry forced their withdrawal the following year.

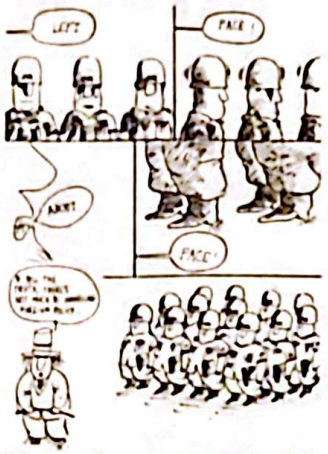
The United States continued to offer bilateral aid, largely through the AID (Agency for International Development) programme. In the 1960's, 1,639 Costa Ricans received counterinsurgency training at the US Army School of the Americas in Panama — more than any other Central American country except Somoza's Nicaragua! Such training is not merely technical, but carries a strong ideological content.

With the Sandinista triumph in 1979 (Costa Rica supported the FSLN against Somoza) and Reagan's election in 1980, US pressure on Costa Rica increased again. But President Monge turned down offers of training at the Regional Military Training Centre (CREM) in Honduras and of participation in war games. In late 1983, Monge agreed to let 1,000 US military engineers build roads and bridges in the northern border zone (with Nicaragua). Public opinion was decisively opposed to the move and Monge was obliged to turn down the engineers too.

In November 1983, President Monge reiterated his country's commitment to neutrality and 50,000 people took to the streets in support (one of the largest demonstrations ever in Costa Rica).

Costa Rica has one of the highest per capita debts in the world and is permanently in hock to the IMF. This year it will receive $20m in loans and grants from the United States. As a senior Costa Rican government official put it, President Monge "can only say no to a generous friend so many times."

Now Monge has agreed to accept two dozen US Green Beret special forces advisers to train a 750-man counterinsurgency unit drawn from Costa Rica's Civil Guard. The training course will



last for five months and will be conducted on a huge ranch just ten miles from the Nicaraguan border which used to belong to Somoza. Nicaragua fears that this will become a permanent US camp and a base for an eventual US intervention. A Pentagon spokesperson proudly referred to the new battalion as "the first military unit in Costa Rica since it dismantled its army in 1949."

The United States has encouraged the Costa Rican right who wish to abandon traditional neutrality. In July 1984, a campaign by right-wing groups succeeded in ousting the moderate Minister of Public Security, Angel Solano and replacing him with Benjamin Piza Escalante. Piza is the founder of the far-right *Movimiento Costa Rica Libre*, which has links with Guatemala's 'White Hand' death squads.

Piza's appointment was immediately followed by a request to the United States for a 300% increase in military aid. From nothing in 1980, US military aid will rise to $10m in 1985. Recently, Costa Rica's paramilitary Civil and Rural Guard has been receiving more sophisticated equipment, such as light aircraft, speedboats and personnel carriers. Piza has hinted that the number of US advisers may rise.

Furthermore, the United States has recently set up a Voice of America radio transmitter in Costa Rica at a cost of $3.5m to beam propaganda into Nicaragua. Costa Rica had to bend its laws on land ownership to allow the US to use the site.

Costa Rica's incipient militarization not only threatens Nicaragua, but provides the apparatus for internal repression. OPEN, a 10,000-strong right-wing paramilitary group, has been incorporated into the Ministry of Public Security as "public reserve forces." Recently, people protesting about poor water services were met with riot police and tear gas. Last year two people were killed and many wounded when police opened fire on striking banana workers.

Costa Rica's stance of 'perpetual, unarmed neutrality' is fast losing credibility.

The Uneasy Alliance: US, Honduras, Contras

From Tony Jenkins,
Ciguentes, Honduras

THE ARMY roadblock at this tiny village on Honduras southern border with Nicaragua is evidence of the deteriorating relationship between the Honduran armed forces and the US-backed Nicaraguan counter-revolutionaries.

The roadblock not only prevented journalists from getting into a tightly patrolled army 'emergency zone' but also stops the so-called contras from getting out.

For three years the largest rebel group — the FDN - has been camped along a 30-mile stretch of the border here and has 'roamed freely' as one officer put it. But the contras' failure to capture a single Nicaraguan village and Congress' April decision to stop aiding the contras (now reversed) has made the Honduran officers question the FDN presence.

When the Sandinista army crossed the border in hot pursuit three weeks ago and started shelling a contra camp called Las Vegas — where up to 2,000 FDN men were waiting for fresh supplies — the Hondurans decided that they had had enough.

The chief of the armed forces, General Walter Lopez, ordered the FDN camps closed and the rebels divided into smaller groups and 'controlled'. Since then, peasants here say that they have not seen the contra's familiar blue-green uniforms.

An international relief organisation official, who toured the emergency zone a week ago, said that all the contras have now left Las Vegas.

One of the army's most senior officers, who refused to let himself be identified said: 'If they are guerrillas; why aren't they in the mountains in Nicaragua? They are a bunch of dilettantes who pass their lives in the casino. They will never overthrow the Sandinistas.'

The officer also complained that the FDN men were 'out of control'. He was objecting to scattered incidents where contras have raped or murdered villagers. He said that he believed the reports of FDN atrocities in Nicaragua.

Two contra leaders reacted angrily last week when questioned about the strained relations. One said: 'They don't seem to realise we are fighting almost single-handed to defend their way of life. The trouble is they have been tricked by the Communist propaganda.'

A further indication of the growing restrictions of FDN activities by Nicaragua's neighbours was that the two spokesmen only agreed to be interviewed on the condition that their identities and the country where the interview was held be kept secret.

'Since May 1984 we have been working on our own. Even the Americans are afraid to face the Sandinistas,' one said. 'We are the victims of a well-organised campaign to accuse us of human rights violations.'

However, the Honduran armed forces have not suddenly gone soft on the Sandinistas. Another senior officer said: 'We are constantly telling the Americans to invade Nicaragua, to put an end to communism in the region. But if they won't we have no choice but to find a way to normalise relations with the Sandinistas; we cannot allow ourselves to be dragged into a war.'

Nevertheless, the Hondurans continue to aid the FDN. One of the officers admitted that two FDN DC3 planes fly almost daily supply missions into Nicaragua from a US-built air force strip in Honduras called Aguacate.

The mud road to Ciguentes is daily ploughed up by the FDN supply trucks and one of the FDN leaders said: 'We have a Ho Chi Minh trail into Nicaragua with 300 mules.'

In a border town, Danli locals pointed out a secret FDN hospital. Through the windows it was possible to see medical equipment and a young man in a wheelchair.

Despite the problems with the Honduran army the FDN spokesmen claimed that they are now fighting 'more frequently and in more parts of Nicaragua than ever before. We have 17,000 men and 500 new boys are joining us every month. We will soon overthrow the Sandinistas.'

The Honduran officers responded: 'If they had 17,000 men they would be in Managua by now. Its a lie.'

reproduced with permission from The Guardian

The Privatization of US Foreign Policy

SINCE CONGRESS originally cut off funding for the contras in May 1984, a host of far-right private US organizations have stepped in to fill the gap. Research by the Institute of Policy Studies in Washington indicates that such groups raised some $27m in the space of one year. Many of the contras' US supporters have the advantage of being millionaires.

Some two dozen groups are involved, including: The 'Moonies' sect — their International Cause front organization is identified by the contras as their main source of cash, goods and training since May 1984. The Moonies' newspaper, The Washington Times has recently

launched an appeal, endorsed by former US ambassador to the UN Jeane Kirkpatrick and former Treasury Secretary William Simon, for the $14m denied the contras by Congress.

Christian Science Broadcasting — has provided the greatest individual amount of aid to the contras. Uses the 700 Club TV programme to raise funds.

World Anti-Communist League — directed by retired general John Singlaub, one of the foremost supporters of the contras. Has sent "millions of dollars in uniforms, food and medical supplies."

Organizations such as Civilian Military Assistance and Soldier of Fortune magazine, largely composed of Vietnam veterans, have sent mercenaries to fight alongside the contras, including the two Britons captured in Costa Rica in April.

In addition, the CIA — despite the congressional ban — has still channelled some $5m to the contras through its slush funds and other surreptitious mechanisms. Congressional sources also indicate that the CIA arranged for USAF aircraft worth $2m to be transferred free to the contras. These have subsequently been used in aerial attacks.

As a result of the Denton Amendment, USAF aircraft are allowed to transport private 'humanitarian' aid to Central America.

Now that Congress has voted to restore 'humanitarian' aid to the contras, these private efforts will not cease and will probably increase.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY REAGAN'S "FREEDOM FIGHTERS"

Mother and children mourning in centre of Puerto Cabezas, Northern Zelaya, Nicaragua

NO AID TO THE CONTRAS IN NICARAGUA

USDCA (U.S. Out of Central America) National Office: 2940 16th St., Suite 7, San Francisco, CA 94103 (415) 550-8000

The Archbishop of Managua, Miguel Obando y Bravo, has been made a cardinal by Pope John Paul II. His promotion is seen as a gesture of support for Obando's key role in the opposition. Obando celebrated his first mass as cardinal among his supporters — including contra leaders — in Miami!

Photo: Theo Uittenhout

Adrian Gorzveta, Enrique Mejia Godoy and Amparo Ochoa singing together for Central America

LIBERTAD!

Central American concert

ON FRIDAY 12 April, a breath of atmospheric Latin music brightened up the gloom of Central Hall, Westminster. Mexican Amparo Ochoa looking stunning in her Indian dress opened the evening. She interpreted traditional Mexican ballads, feminist and revolutionary songs with great depth. Brava Amparo!

Amparo warmed up the audience by now eagerly awaiting the star of the evening: Luis Enrique Mejia Godoy. Guitar on shoulder, Enrique walked on stage and played the popular Nicaraguan song "Yo soy de un pueblo sencillo". Despite his lack of English, he established a lively communication with the audience. His songs reflected the diverse musical traditions of Nicaragua, ranging from the Pacific to the Atlantic Coasts. It was a great privilege and pleasure to have him amongst us. Enrique's performance ended the first part of the evening. During the interval, Jenny Pearce gave a concise and clear exposition of the current situation in Nicaragua and Central America, a reminder that the evening was above all a political event aimed at raising awareness and solidarity.

Adrian Goizueta and his Costa Rican Group Experimental filled the stage for the last part of the programme, with a surprising array of musical instruments. A variety of sounds blending into a fusion of avant-guard Latin jazz held the audience spellbound. Adrian's lyrics express the tragic reality of everyday life in Latin America — the "desaparecidos", repression, hunger — but always with an underlying element of hope and love.

The evening reached its climax with all the performers coming together to sing a homage to Commandante Carlos Fonseca, one of the founders of the FSLN. This was definitely the most moving part of the evening, bringing out the strongest feelings of fraternity and solidarity. VIVA NICARAGUA LIBRE! Let's have them back soon!

'VIVA' by Andy de la Tour (Theatre Royal, London)

In his first play, Andy de la Tour has done something very special — he has taken the structure of British farce but replaced the usual sexist drivel with political satire. 'Viva' is about the last days of revolution in a corrupt CIA-backed Central American state. The action takes place in the lobby of a luxury hotel where the remnants of the military dictatorship — the General, the CIA operative, Archbishop and President (who will not leave without his father's corpse) — are holed up. A naive young reporter from Radio Portsmouth acts as accidental witness to the events. The cast is completed by the hotel manager and waiter plus 'el macho' squaddie.

The plot builds its tension around an impending bombing and offers de la Tour the opportunity for some excellent one-liners and cutting observations as well as the sight of once powerful men reduced to ludicrous panic as they try to flee the country. The highlight of the play was the hotel manager's solo piece towards the end of part I, which was political theatre at its very best and a clear articulation of the need for a quick end to Reagan-style democracy in Central America. For a first play this is a major success and well worth a visit.

THE RECENT VISIT by the Nicaraguan folk group Heroes & Martyrs to Liverpool brought to our attention the problems which they have in their country — the band had to cope with the technical limitations of poor quality instruments. Local musicians at the concert thought it would be a positive and immediate gesture to buy the group a decent acoustic guitar as an act of solidarity with their movement for freedom and cultural expression.

At a time when Liverpool and its twin city, Corinto, Nicaragua's main seaport, are embarking on a Direct Links Campaign, fully supported by Liverpool City Council, Merseyside County Council, health workers, education workers, trade unions, co-ops and Liverpool artists, this campaign is an opportunity for everybody, *musicians particularly*, to help Nicaraguan musicians. Instruments can be donated (or funds to by them) to the MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR NICARAGUA CAMPAIGN.

Instruments are already coming in, and any further ones can be left at the Merseyside Trade Union, Community & Unemployed Resource Centre, Hardman Street and they will be stored until ready for shipping to Nicaragua for distribution.

Anything will be welcome and will undoubtedly be used, so start digging around in your attic, under the bed, behind the wardrobe and let someone else make full use of something that is cluttering up your home — or your studio, *for those bands doing better and with presumably more to give!*

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
John (709 4254 — early evening)
Mark (708 7957 — 12.30-1.30pm)

Nicaragua: Economy at War

NICARAGUA FACES the most serious economic crisis since the revolution. In November 1984, the Nicaraguans held the first free elections in their history with a turn out and majority for the FSLN that far surpassed those for Reagan's election two days later.

With the support of the people so clearly behind them, the Government has summarised its goals for 1985 in the watchwords "For peace, all against aggression". The major emphasis will be fighting the war in an attempt to prevent the contras from operating within Nicaraguan territory. At the end of 1984, President Ortega described the principal economic problems as:

1) A drop in supply
2) Deterioration of the transportation and communication infrastructures
3) Inflation
4) Growing speculation
5) The fiscal deficit
6) Lack of uniformity in prices
7) A precipitous fall in agricultural activity.

Last year the official inflation rate rose to over 40% — black market figures would make this figure even higher. The foreign debt has risen to $4.35 billion and in 1985 the interest due will by $187m. The value of the country's principal crops has decreased by 30% in the last five years relative to industrial imports. Additionally, Nicaragua has to cope with the cost of the war. (See Nicaragua Today No. 18).

Somoza's Legacy

During the 1960's the country experienced strong economic growth which concentrated profits into a small elite and left the poorest people worse off. This expansion came to an end in the 1970's with the oil crisis, world recession and the earthquake in 1972. By the end of the '70s the economy was faltering. The 'coup de grace' was dealt by the destruction brought about during the insurrection when crops were not harvested and sown, and factories and houses were bombed by Somoza's airforce.

When Somoza fled to Miami in July '79 he left Nicaragua with a foreign debt of $1.6 billion. Nicaragua's foreign currency reserves stood at $3.5 million, barely enough to pay for one day's imports. Over 70% of Nicaragua's export earnings come from agricultural products. Since 1979, world prices for Nicaragua's four main exports — coffee, cotton, sugar and beef — have declined sharply, while at the same time the cost of imported manufactured goods and oil has risen sharply. Having to import nearly everything from oil and tractors to toothpaste tubes and nails, Nicaragua faces a chronic balance of trade deficit.

Since the Sandinistas rose to power in 1979, the U.S. has used its influence to delay and block Nicaraguan applications to multilateral institutions. In 1983, the U.S. vetoed a $2.2 million International Development Bank (IADB) loan for a project to build roads to open up the more inaccessible coffee growing areas. The U.S. publicised its policy of no loans unless the Nicaraguans "revitalise the private sector" and "improve the efficiency of the public sector". Although the FSLN agreed with these objectives, the blocking of loans obviously guaranteed that they would prove almost impossible to implement.

U.S. pressure and use of its veto meant that in 1984 Nicaragua was the *only* Latin American country not to receive money from the IADB(International Development Bank).

Austerity Measures

President Ortega has announced sweeping measures to deal with the country's critical economic situation. The complicated austerity package is intended as a response to the effects of the war and economic embargo imposed by the U.S., and is designed to stimulate production. The measures include a devaluation of the cordoba, a rise in interest rates, a freeze on state spending, new taxes and an end to the food subsidy programme.

Los carbonales co-op destroyed by the contras

Subsidies on food and basic products were introduced to control prices while supply was maintained and still is, through "controlled channels" both in the urban and rural areas. These subsidies cost the country 7,000 million cordobas. The rationalisation of the subsidy policy, even regarding basic goods, has been introduced to overcome supply and demand imbalances. In the last few years the black market has taken a stronger hold and many small dealers are involved in speculation — raiding industrial firms and syphoning off products which should be in the shops, markets and pharmacies — thus exacerbating the problem of supply while at the same time selling at exhorbitant prices. Government subsidies on basic foods will be eliminated or maintained at diminished levels. It is hoped that the measure will help to stabilise prices. At the same time, the basic minimum wage was raised to 2,500 cordobas a month (an increase of 47%), with a further increase in March to 3,000 cordobas (70% up from January figures).

There will also be readjustment of salaries for workers involved in production, and a redistribution of income so as to favour production. Further wage rises for workers involved in production are envisaged throughout the year to reflect the rate of inflation. It is intended that these wages will serve as a guideline for further anti-inflationary measures.

By concentrating wage rises and incentives in the productive sector, the government is hoping to both expand and bring more workers into this area and to establish more balance between wages and basic necessities.

With 40% of the economy going to the war effort, many special programmes have had to be curtailed. The latest measure include a freeze on the extension of services such as water and electricity, housing and supply networks for basic goods in urban areas, and the placing of greater emphasis on extending these services to the rural areas. This will affect Managua, which with a population of 800,000 is overpopulated, and may slow down the steady migration from the countryside to the capital.

The government is, therefore, attempting to encourage production inside the country by strengthening small and medium producers, and is allocating resources to outlying cities and rural areas to combat centralisation.

It is interesting to note that, when the IMF intervenes in developing countries, the measures they dictate strengthen the nations' dependency on transnational and large monopoly producers. These result in increased migration from the countryside to the towns, as resources are largely concentrated on the cities.

These remain, however, austerity measures, and those hit hardest will be workers in the informal sector, often the poorest in the urban areas. It is a measure of the government's popularity and of the all-pervading experience and knowledge of the cost of the U.S. war against Nicaragua that they have been met with such patient and understanding acceptance.

Survivors of a Contra attack on the farm which destroyed their homes, Matagalpa

Trade Embargo — The US Never Learns

THE TRADE EMBARGO Reagan has imposed on Nicaragua was clearly a blow, but hardly a surprise to the country. When Washington shut out most of Nicaragua's sugar in 1983, it was an obvious downpayment on a full embargo.

But the move is not unique. Cuba attracted the same treatment nearly 25 years ago. It has survived, and even managed to prosper, through a combination of ingenuity and the support of its trading partners in Comecon, the Soviet-led trade bloc. Its success in riding out the boycott is a constant irritation in Washington and a great boost to morale in Managua.

The Cuban experience then is of great importance to Nicaragua both in its similarities and, perhaps more importantly, in its differences. The Sandinistas have assimilated Cuba's experience and won Castro's endorsement for the way they have tailored their tactics.

For the US, the name of the game is always the same — Economic Warfare. Their aim is to force a young, popular, socialist government into a position where they cannot provide the basics let alone fulfill revolutionary pledges.

The method is to cut out key markets for the target country's vital agricultural exports to starve it of the hard currency it needs to buy essential imports. Disaffected supporters of the revolution may then be channelled into outright opposition, manipulated with the degree of discreetness the US judges necessary towards its allies. Counterrevolution is supposed to lead to the victim's 'rescue' from socialism, ideally by self-destruction. Thus the Reagan Administration tries to portray the conflict in Nicaragua as 'Nicaraguans fighting Nicaraguans'. Washington prefers to use remote control to restore 'order', but plans direct intervention both as a possible last resort and to keep up psychological pressure.

Oil has been a key factor in the case of both Cuba and Nicaragua. In the case of Cuba — which has no fossil fuels of its own — the big US oil companies' refusal to refine a Cuban purchase of Soviet oil in 1960 led to a dispute that ended with Cuba buying almost all its oil from the USSR.

The US retaliated by blocking Cuba's major export, sugar. By October 1962 the US embargo became an outright blockade that contributed to 1962 and 1963 seeing the worst economic setbacks of the revolution. That blockade meant ever-closer links with the Soviet bloc over the next decade. But by 1972, when Cuba finally joined Comecon, 40 per cent of its trade still involved the exchange of dollars with US allies in Canada, Western Europe and Japan. That share has shrunk to 13 per cent as the world sugar price has dropped.

Twenty years on, Cuba still lives with the effects of the embargo. The island has lost more than nine billion dollars in trade, tourism and increased costs due to the blockade. In any Cuban street you can see fantastic fifties automobiles, kept going more out of necessity than pride. Thunderbirds, Pontiacs and Oldsmobiles line up at the lights with sharkstooth-grille Russian Ladas. It's an everyday scene that sums up the consequence of the boycott — a massive increase in trade with the Soviet Union. Western diplomats estimate that the USSR subsidises Cuba to the extent of up to six billion dollars a year through indirect aid such as guaranteed high prices for its sugar and cheap supplies of oil.

But Cuba's frank alignment with the Soviet bloc has had heavy costs in terms of world opinion; opinion which Nicaragua sees as vital insurance policy against US invasion. To avoid going for the 'Cuban option', President Daniel Ortega and his deputy Sergio Ramirez have taken on busy schedules of missions abroad both to seek new markets and secure declared support.

Oil is again a strategic factor. Mexico used to be chief supplier but suspended deliveries in 1983 when Nicaragua failed to pay. The Soviet Union started to provide half the country's needs in 1984 and responded to the embargo with a pledge to supply 80 to 90 per cent of requirements.

Encouragingly, Mexico stepped in again at the end of May and promised supplies at a discount "understanding the difficult economic circumstance", and Nicaragua hopes that, unlike Cuba, it will eventually be able to exploit natural sources of energy, including geothermal.

Also, Nicaragua is not as heavily dependent as Cuba on a single export crop. And it has already been adjusting trade away from the US. In 1980 its exports to the US totalled $179m , imports $243m. Last year the figures were $60m and $120m respectively.

Libya, Algeria and Iran have bought the sugar rejected by the US. Bananas and shellfish, worth over $15m each in the US market, look set to go to Europe. Tobacco and meat will be seeking new buyers. Coffee, Nicaragua's biggest export earner, mostly goes to West Germany anyway and will be minimally affected. Other European countries are also beginning to import Nicaraguan coffee. Transport costs will go up and there will be delivery delays.

US business stands to lose freight charges, a big tender to construct fishing vessels and markets in fats, agrochemicals and machinery. Latin American suppliers could fill in for raw materials and Western and Eastern European manufacturers for machinery. Many spare parts for US machinery can be obtained from US subsidiaries overseas and the items replaced gradually.

In the short term, agriculture and health will be hard hit. Nicaragua has to find new sources of basic chemicals and spare parts for hospital equipment such as X-ray machines. Mexico has already signed a deal for the former. The European Economic Community (EEC) and individual European countries have also pledged to honour existing commitments and step up aid and trade to Nicaragua.

It will be painful to readjust, according to Sr. Xavier Gorostiaga, head of an economic research institute based in Managua. But he is optimistic that in the medium term, it will produce better trading relationships with Europe, Latin America, the Socialist bloc and the rest of the world.

The US could tighten the screws still further. It could try extending the embargo to US subsidiaries abroad, and declare Nicaragua in default of its over $4.2m dollar debt, a third of which is owed to US banks.

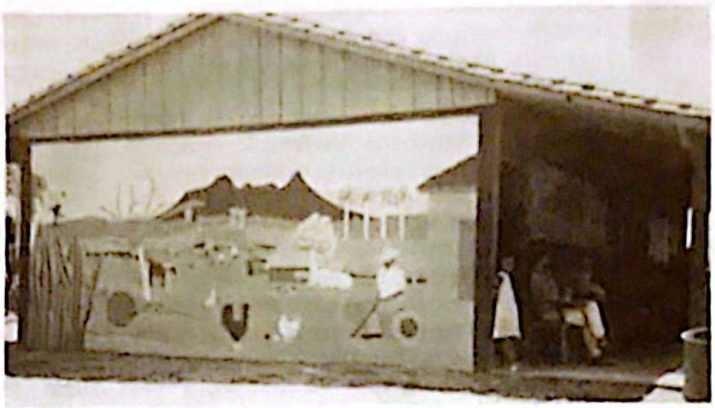
Even if it doesn't do this, the embargo will undoubtedly cause further hardship for the hardpressed Nicaraguans. But it will not be decisive in determining the country's future. 'The country will not grind to a halt', as Sr. Norguera, director of the State Importing Agency *Enimport* put it. Ironically, since 60 per cent of production is still in private hands, it is private business that will be hardest hit.

The US-sponsored contras and the propaganda battle will also have key roles in determining how the country will tackle the embargo. At present, the necessity of fighting contra attacks is absorbing 40 per cent of government expenditure.

Import substitution is a Cuban keyword and Nicaraguans have enthusiastically taken up improvising spare parts. As the embargo bites, the Sandinistas will have to find out what Cuban 'innovators' put in rum to make Cuba Libre these days as there will not be any Coke for Nica Libre soon.

'An iguana in the hand is worth two in the tree'

HELEN YUILL was a member of an eight person construction brigade organised by NSC. They were in Nicaragua from November until this April — building a two classroom primary school near Leon on the Pacific Coast.



School built by the Danish construction brigade

Photos: Helen Yuill

'MUERTE AL SOMOCISMO' crackles forth from Radio Sandino followed by the latest from the Nicaraguan charts 'Corazón Magico' (Magic Heart) and an ATC* slogan about the importance of increasing cotton production. The pig snuffles in its breakfast of wheat and banana skins, little lizards with bright yellow bodies scuttle around in the dust, roosters and dogs join the chorus. Life begins to stir in Santa Paula, the small community in the middle of a vast expanse of cotton where I am staying.

Candida, the mother of the three children, shouts 'Levantate, levantate!' to eleven year old Gregorio and seven year old Ediberto. Every morning from Monday to Saturday they go off to pick cotton, their wages being a vital supplement to the family's income. They surface slowly to a breakfast of rice, beans and sugary coffee. Candida also shouts at an older man who lives in the house. He forgot to pick up rations of beans, rice, maize, sugar and coffee from the distribution centre yesterday. She retorts 'When a man turns up he always brings problems', a sentiment shared by many Nicaraguan women.

As it gets light at about 5.30 a tractor and trailer grind in to Santa Paula to take the workers off to pick cotton. They are a mixture of local people and brigades from other parts of Nicaragua who have come for the three month period of the harvest. By this time of the harvest — April — the cotton picking machines have already been sweeping across four rows of cotton at a time, sucking it up into huge cage-like structures. Working a twelve-hour day they can harvest about 4,000lbs compared with 100-300lbs that it would be possible to pick by hand. It's now well into the dry season and by mid-morning the scorched plain is like a great furnace. The workers are well protected against the scratchy cotton plants which have been sprayed with defoliant to make picking easier. Their work consists of picking balls of cotton from the plants and from the ground and putting them into sacks hooked to a belt around their waists. They can pick 75-100lbs per day for which they are paid 130 cordobas for 100lbs. A day's work will buy about 1lb of cheese on the open market, three days work a tin of milk powder and eight days a pair of scissors.

I meet up with the rest of the brigade at Santa Rica where we are building the school. Julian is sighted disappearing into the cotton field with a spade in one hand and some cotton in the other (OK as toilet paper substitute apart from the seeds!), struck down again by what he later discovered was dysentry. After three months work the school actually looks like a building rather than a satellite tracking station. The block work is completed and we are working with two Nicaraguan workers on the plastering. Their technique for plastering is to use a trowel and flick the plaster at the wall which, given the extreme heat, is a very effective method.

At 9.00 we have a break for coffee, mangos, grapefruit, or any of the rich variety of fruit that is common. We chat with the Nicaraguans — comparing English and Nicaraguan proverbs. Our attempts to adapt English proverbs to a local context result in "An iguana in the hand is worth two in the tree".

A long discussion follows as to what we should do about the lack of water. The barrels are almost empty again and because of the acute shortage of fuel and spare parts for machinery on the state farm, it's very difficult to get a tractor and trailer to take the barrels to the river to fill them up. A temporary solution is to draw water from a nearby well, half fill a barrel, place it on some planks on a wheelbarrow and pray that the wheelbarrow doesn't collapse!

At 11 it's back to Santa Paula for a lunch of fruit drink, beans and rice, boiled banana and lizard — followed by an hour's siesta.

By this time the wind is blowing up the fine powdery dust with occasional whirlwinds sending great plumes of topsoil into the air. The afternoon is spent mixing concrete — supplies of cement are now coming from Cuba because the only cement factory in Nicaragua has run out of bags and has had to close down temporarily.

At 5 when we return to Santa Paula the children are doing their jobs, drawing water from the well, collecting wood for the fire, dragging a reluctant pig to its sleeping place in the kitchen and topping up the candels. There are plans to introduce electricity this year but at the moment the people use bottles of diesel with a rag stuffed into the top.

Towards sunset the children gather for a game of baseball with a stick from a nearby tree and an old sock stuffed with cotton. They manoeuvre around a caterpillar tractor that came to a halt in the middle of Santa Paula a couple of years ago, another victim of the spare parts shortage.

I go off to get water from the well to wash with, Candida warning me of the dire consequences of washing in the afternoon when I am hot, i.e. death from pneumonia. Candida has a small piece of poinsettia stuck to her temples and back — the thick white sap is a cure for headaches. After having eleven children (five of whom have died) she suffers from headaches and stomach pains and her life is a constant search for some relief. Sometimes she uses remedies such as the poinsettia, sometimes costly visits to private doctors. Despite poverty and the vastly improved state health care facilities since the revolution, many people still use private doctors. This is partly out of habit and partly because people feel they will get better treatment if they pay for it. A visit to the doctor plus the cost of medicines normally costs 300-400 cordobas, about four days wages. Last time Candida tried to go to the doctor she discovered that he was on holiday in Miami and nobody was very sure whether he was coming back or not.

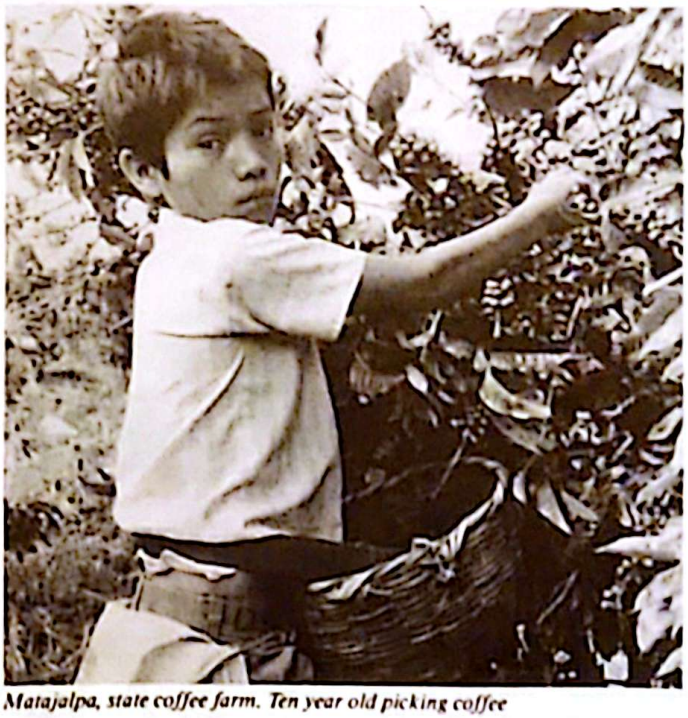
By 8 everyone has gone to bed except the ATC representative doing revolutionary vigilance guarding the machinery. There's now a lot of equipment around for ploughing the fields to sow maize as soon as the cotton has finished. As part of a programme to try to make Nicaragua self-sufficient in basic food and provide year-round employment for the workers, maize is being sown in rotation with cotton.

A group from the brigade are organising a spare parts project for the state farm — raising funds, buying the parts here and sending them to Nicaragua. If you can help or would like more information contact: James Summers on 029671 3126 or Helen Yuill 01-968 7744 (work) or 373 9784 (home).

* Agricultural Workers Union

The "Che Guevara squad"

The following article contains excerpts from a conversation recorded in Managua with four young people recently returned from picking coffee around "El Crucero", an area of steep hills and valleys just to the south of the city. Run, like much of the pre-revolutionary economy, by Somoza's friends and family, the majority of coffee 'haciendas' have been confiscated and are now managed by the State Complex "Eduardo Contreras". This system coordinates the 120 State Production Units, on one of which the children were working with a voluntary student production brigade. The children were all part of the same 'squad' — named 'Che Guevara' since half of them were 'internacionalistas'. There were ten of them in all — two Chileans, three Guatemalans and five 'nicas'. The squad itself was part of the brigade of 120 children, broken into four 'platoons' of 30 each and each platoon into three squads of 10. These brigades are not allowed to go to the north becuase of the escalation of the war situation there, but despite being in a 'safe' zone, even the youngest do armed revolutionary vigilance at night and life is far from easy.



Matajalpa, state coffee farm. Ten year old picking coffee

Cover Photo: Jenny Matthews

Sebastian: I'm Chilean, and 11 years old and since we just came over from England four months ago, this has been my first experience on the coffee harvest. I thought that coffee picking was going to be dreadful. The idea of being given a plank to sleep on, being got up at 6 am, given beans and rice for breakfast and then a basket and a gun and sent off to pick coffee sounded pretty rough, but I went anyway.

Claudio *(14, Sebastian's brother)*: Come off it! That would have been like a holiday! The truth is that we had to get up at 4.30-5.00am, have a quick wash and breakfast of rice and beans, and about 7 we'd go off picking up the mountains, up and down very steep slopes. Until about 10 it was pretty cold. But it was fun, trying to reach the highest branches with special hooks while trying to balance on those slopes at the same time. And to think that in England — we lived in England for a long time because of the situation in my country — the earliest I would ever get up was 7am and just to go to school round the corner, paved streets and no 'contras'!

Ivonne *(14, Guatemalan)*: Like Claudio and Sebastian, I'm here because of the situation in my country, and this is also my first experience of coffee picking. Yes, it is very tiring, but a good experience. Before, I spent a lot of time at home, but this has been really good — it's helped me to become more independent. I know I can't do whatever I want, but I have learnt how to fend for myself; well, a little bit anyway ...

I think the most important thing for me, and I think for the rest of us, was the fact that we helped the revolution by joining the coffee harvest to bring more money into the country.

Claudio: But you have to be careful not to break the branches. If you do — well, it's a waste for the country, because it takes five years for that branch to produce again.

Sebastian: As I was told, the best way to cut coffee is to take hold of the branch and pull off the grains like you were milking a cow. We did it pretty well, I used to cut about 2½ 'medios' *(around 37 pounds)*.

Lenin: My name is Lenin. I'm 16 years old and Nicaraguan. The important thing is that these 'compas' were helping Nicaragua. Every grain cut helps. You always cut the red grains, so you have to go carefully. In the area where we were the grain is smaller than up north so it takes longer to fulfil your quota.

Sebastian: Most of the coffee goes for export, so maybe over there in England you'll be drinking coffee picked by one of us!

Claudio: Lenin was pretty good — he used to cut about five 'medios', Ivonne and I used to get about three, but after all this is our first time.

The smallest beans and the ones which aren't fully ripe, usually the stuff from the last cut, is used for making instant coffee here.

Lenin: I think it was a great experience — I'm glad I met these 'compas', it is nice to work with people from other countries.

Sebastian: Hopefully next year I will be able to go to the north to pick when I am more used to the country and have learnt how to defend myself better, because sometimes the 'contras' attack those areas. It would be nice if they could send over a children's brigade from England, because I think it's very important to see what's really going on and tell the others when you go back what Nicaragua's really like.

Claudio: It's true that we knew quite a lot about Nicaragua before we came, but it's different when you really see what it's like and it's a nice feeling to be able to help and learn. None of us want to be killed; we just want to go on helping and learning.

Lenin: I think the idea of a British children's brigade is great, but it's a bit difficult since they're also fighting — well, the miners are pretty hard up. I learnt a lot about life in England and the workers' struggles from Claudio and Sebastian. What British people could do is go on supporting us because our struggle is also going to help them. Also our revolution is an example for other Latin American countries, and if we all support and help each other, one day Claudio, Sebastian and Ivonne will be able to go back to their countries.

Coffee harvest Brigades from the UK

This year the NSC is organizing at least one mixed brigade to participate in the coffee harvest, possibly two, and a women's brigade is being organized by the women's section of the NSC.

The brigades will spend around six weeks in Nicaragua, with some time at the end for travel, leaving December '85 and early January '86. Specific departure dates to be announced.

The cost will be between £650-750, which includes London - Managua round trip, food and accommodation costs, administration fee and spending money.

'Heroes y Martires'

Nicaraguan folk-group's tour of England a major success

'The Heroes and Martyrs of San Francisco del Norte' is not an especially catchy name for a folk-group, it has to be admitted, but for the members of the group it has a special significance. The name reminds them of a massacre by contras in 1983 of farmworkers in the town of San Francisco del Norte. Ramon, the group's accordianist, lives near the town and lost friends in the massacre.

None of the group's members are professional musicians. They are all farmworkers for whom music is a sideline; Ramon Timoteo; Porfirio and Eugenio work on a state cotton farm near Chinandega in the North West of Nicaragua; Alfredo is a driver for the state production enterprise of which this farm forms a part, whilst Celso Chavarria, the group's leader, now works for the Agricultural Workers Union (ATC) in Managua. Their music, like their name, has a special significance; the songs they write are, in Celso's words, "dedicated to the revolution, to joy and to love".

It is also great dance music! While on tour in England in May they played 13 full concerts and never failed to get the audience on their feet, no matter how difficult the venue. In Birmingham, they played to almost 500 people, — including the Bishop of Birmingham — in the city's Cathedral. Together with the Chilean group Meliantu, they soon had the audience dancing. A genuine case of rocking them in the aisles! The story was the same in the Merseyside Trade Union Centre, where they played with Grupo Andes, in the Workers Film Association in Manchester. A video was made of their tour in each of the places they visited over the two weeks.

The group visited this country not only as musicians, but also as representatives of their union, the ACT. In this capacity they attended the conference of the Society of Civil and Public Servants in Eastbourne, receiving a standing ovation from the delegates who subsequently voted to affiliate their union to the NSC. They also made a visit to farmworkers on a farm in Essex accompanied by representatives of the Agricultural Workers Union (now a section of the T&GWU) and where scheduled to appear at a social in the headquarters of the NALGO in London, which was unfortunately cancelled due to a strike by NALGO's head office staff.

In several of the towns they visited they had meetings with Councillors and Mayors. In Liverpool they attended the formal ceremony to twin Liverpool with the Nicaraguan town of Corinto, while in Southampton and Coventry they had discussions with Council Leaders which covered the possibility of twinning with Nicaraguan towns. Similar meetings took place in Manchester, Birmingham, Oxford and the London Borough of Lambeth.

In Norwich the group addressed a meeting at the School of Development Studies at the University of East Anglia; in Bradford they took part in an 'Anti-Imperialist Day' at Bradford University; in Coventry they met shop stewards at the Rolls Royce factory; in Southampton the group visited a fruit and vegetable distribution cooperative; in Oxford and Lambeth they visited several schools.

These are just a few of the imaginative and generally very successful activities which were arranged for the 'Heroes and Martyrs' by the local solidarity groups in these towns, all of whom found the folk-group tremendously useful in improving their contacts locally and in increasing solidarity for Nicaragua. Many people also said how important it was for them actually to be able to meet some ordinary Nicaraguans and hear at first hand their positive experience of the revolution. Thanks are due to all the people around the country who put such effort into arranging their part of the tour, and not least to the newly formed Irish Solidarity Committee which organised the European visit of the 'Heroes and Martyrs'.

'DIMENSION COSTENA', ATLANTIC COAST SALSA — UK DATES

Nicaragua's best loved salsa/reggae band will be performing in the UK for the first time in September. 'Dimension Costena' are well known throughout Nicaragua for their wild & exhuberant performances at weddings, celebrations and festivals. Their unique blend of musical styles form Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America reflects the colonial history of Bluefields on the Atlantic Coast from where Dimension Costena originate. The group already have some dedicated fans in the UK, notably the Radio 1 DJ John Peel who was willing to cycle to the NSC office to collect some 'Dimension Costena' records to play over the radio. 'Arena' the BBC documentary team have recently returned from Bluefields where they have completed a programme about Dimension Costena and 'Maypole' music. This programme is scheduled to be shown in late August.

So catch Dimension Costena live at:

- **The Academy, Brixton, London — Friday September 20th; with Misty in Roots, Latin Quarter, Sonido de Londres, + special guests**
- **Town Hall, Manchester — Saturday September 21st; with George Melly, Hank Wangford Band.**

Computers for Nicaragua

WHAT USE DOES a poor country like Nicaragua have for high-tech products like computers? In fact, computers are now vital in many areas. In Nicaragua, customs officials at border posts must still scan manually typed lists of restriced persons, unlike their Costa Rican counterparts who have computer printouts.

In the telephone exchange thousands of record cards with long distance calls are painstakingly filled in by hand. The government, in taking over the banking system, inherited out-of-date procedures and a relationship with American computer companies used to foisting off old fashioned equipment and outdated techniques.

The universities have problems obtaining both books and computers. The few books the students have between them are mostly in English. They are passed around, copied by hand and treated like gold dust. The students hardly ever get near the one computer in the UCA — an IBM System 32, with 32K of RAM and two terminals which occasionally runs their RPG-2 and COBOL jobs in batch mode when it is not doing the admin. work for the university. The university pays over $50,000 cordobas per year in rental! Many of the students work full-time in computing already and are therefore able to practice elsewhere; woe betide those who can't.

But things are looking up. The government has opened a new University of Engineering, named after Simon Bolivar. This July a German computer person named Cornelius Hopmann is going to open a micro computer workshop in that university. He is taking with him a number of micros including a Mackintosh and a Rainbow which have been donated by European groups.

Here in Britain we are setting up a support group for the 'Taller de Computo'. We are trying to get hold of micros, power supplies, books, journals and other equipment to send and take down. If you or your friends work in computing or have contacts with computer firms, please ask them to beg, borrow or --- a micro so that we can help the Workshop get off to a good start. No micro however small (even a Spectrum) will be refused.

For details contact Chris Moss, Dept. of Computing, Imperial College, London SW7 2BZ, 01-589 5111 X5071 or 940 0255 (home) or Greg Michaelson, Dept. of Computing, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh EH1 2HJ, 031-225 8432 X244 (home 228 6008).

In the US, computer programmers and other technical experts are flying into Nicaragua to volunteer their services as teachers.

A California-based organization called Technical Support Program for Nicaragua is recruiting volunteers through trade journals. The organization sends small groups of about 15 volunteers to Nicaragua for up to several weeks. Each volunteer has to pay the return air fare, and each group is accompanied by Michael Urmann, founder of the organization.

Mehlene Larudee, of the Technical Support Program said that the volunteers are not political activists but enjoy helping technologically deprived Nicaragua. She added that many return strong supporters of the Nicaraguan government after directly experiencing the country. Peter Botelli from NSC is hoping to teach one of these courses in September.

Anyone who would like to join this scheme should write to Robert Bonati, 34 Norwood Rd., Herne Hill, London SE24 9BH.

A recently returned visitor from Nicaragua said that for the first time his telephone bill was made out by computers. Even in the face of war and economic blockade there are visible marks of technological progress. Let us play our part in helping it!

CAMPAIGN NEWS

Womens Conference and Health workers conference

A conference for women involved in the NSC took place in Manchester on March 30th, attended by women from several local groups and from London. It is hoped to establish a network of women in the NSC to take up specific projects relating to women in Nicaragua and of interest to women in this country, such as sending an all-women work brigade to Nicargua later this year.

The following day, a Sunday, a similar conference was held in Manchester for health workers interested in Nicaragua. The discussions covered health care in Nicaragua and campaigning around the theme of health in this country.

New members for the National Executive

Two new members have been co-opted onto the National Executive of the NSC with the approval of the first Quarterly Delegates Meeting.

Kay Bastin is a health worker from Manchester who visited Nicaragua last year on the NSC's women's delegation. She was elected to the National Executive by the womens' conference which took place in Manchester on March 30th, to fill a place set aside for this purpose by the Annual General Meeting of the NSC.

John Allen is the chair of the International Relations committee of the trade union NALGO and a former president of the union. He too visited Nicaragua last year, as part of a trade union delegation organised by War on Want which attended an International Conference organised by the Nicaraguan Agricultural Workers Union (ATC).

They will both undoubtedly contribute to the effectiveness of the Campaign, bringing their experience from different areas of work. They will be made very welcome.

NSC holds first delegate meeting

AT THE ANNUAL General Meeting of the NSC in Manchester in February a new constitution was adopted which among other things calls for regular meetings of representatives of affiliated local organisations. The first of these Quarterly Delegates Meetings took place on April 27th in London and was attended by 26 delegates representing 19 local solidarity groups and seven other affiliated local organisations. The meeting reviewed the NSC's campaigning plans for 1985 as well as discussing particular items of business held over from the AGM.

More important than the formal aspect of the meeting was the positive feeling which ran through the whole day, reflecting the increase in support for Nicaragua which is taking place in this country. The general opinion was that the first Q.D.M. was a success and provided a useful forum for discussion between local groups and the National Executive and office workers.

The next QDM is scheduled to take place in (or near) Leicester on July 13th.

NSC reacts to US trade embargo

Less than 24 hours after the Reagan Administration announced the imposition of a full embargo on trade, air and sea traffic with Nicaragua, the NSC had organised a picket outside the US embassy in London attended by around 100 people and had circulated guidelines for action to local solidarity groups.

A note of protest, endorsed by several public figures and national unions was issued to the press and subsequently turned into a petition condemning the embargo and calling for an increase in aid from Britain to counteract the embargo. It specifically called for donations to the container appeals about to be launched by the NSC.

By the time this issue of Nicaragua Today is published, an advert will have appeared in the The Guardian paid for and signed by a wide range of individuals and organisations, condemning the embargo and asking for donations to an Emergency Appeal. The initial response has been tremendous. The NSC office has been flooded with letters of support — both moral and financial — in the first few days. Although it is too early yet to estimate how much money has come in the total will certainly be well into the four figure range.

The NSC was not alone in its reaction. Oxfam and War on Want have both run adverts in national newspapers opposing the embargo and asking for donations to their funds for Nicaragua. The Labour Party NEC issued a statement opposed to the embargo, as did Liberal Leader David Steel. As you will have read, the embargo has been opposed by most European and Latin American Governments, and both the EEC and SELA (the Latin American Economic Group) have determined to increase their aid to Nicaragua.

NEW RESOURCES

Several new exciting lines of Nicaragua merchandise are now available both to individuals and local committees. These include:

T-Shirts/Sweatshirts
Made from 100% cotton and hand screen printed in red and black with a choice of two designs • No US intervention in Nicaragua
• FSLN SANDINO
T-Shirts £4.50
S,M,L,XL
Sweatshirts £8.50 all large

"Nicaragua — Big Red Diary"
The famous Pluto Big Red Diary has been produced this year by the NSC and includes a comprehensive introduction to Nicaragua and the Campaign, 52 colour images from Nicaragua, El Salvador, Chile, Guatemala and Honduras, and a directory of all NSC, Latin America Solidarity groups in Britain, Europe and North America.
Available by mail order from NSC at £3.50 + 50p P&P.

1986 Calendar 'Buenos Dias — Nicaragua'
Complete your 1986 Nicaragua set with this superb full-colour calendar with 12 photographs and peasant paintings from Nicaragua. Available by mail order from NSC at £4.00 + 50p P&P

Car Stickers
At last a 5 inch circular plastic sticker with the logo "No US Intervention in Nicaragua" which can be stuck to the outside of your bag, briefcase, windows or wherever. Printed in glorious red and black. These are available at 50p each + 20p P&P

Coffee Mugs
Now drink your Nicaraguan coffee in style from your very own Nicaraguan coffee mug bearing the message "A coffee a day keeps Reagan away" and the now famous "No US Intervention . . . " logo.
Available by mail order at £2.00 each + 50p P&P.

Stickers/Balloons/Carrier Bags
Liven up your stall, event, picket . . . with Nicaragua stickers, balloons, carrier bags all of which carry the usual logo and the NSC address. For bulk orders write to NSC Sales or ring 01-354 0844.

Coming soon . . .
We are about to produce a new range of t-shirts, posters, postcards so keep in touch for further details.

REMEMBER: BUYING AND SELLING THESE AND OTHER NICARAGUA GOODS NOT ONLY BRINGS IN URGENTLY NEEDED MONEY TO THE CAMPAIGN BUT EVERY T—SHIRT, BADGE OR POSTER IS A TOOL FOR CAMPAIGNING AND PUBLICISING THE NEED FOR SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF NICARAGUA.

Beyond the Fringe

NIGHT FOR NICARAGUA

Lyceum Theatre
Edinburgh 1st September, 7pm.

Following on the success of the two 'Night for Nicaragua' cabaret shows held in London, the NSC plans to take the Edinburgh Festival by storm.
The festival show promises to be a riot of comedy and music with star turns from Andy de la Tour, Wildcat Theatre Co., Ben Elton, Pookiesnackenburger, Jenny le Coat and we hope Rik Mayall & Billy Bragg + many more.

Tickets: are available from the Assembly Rooms Box office throughout the Festival . . .

Gig for Nicaragua

Monday July 29th, Savoy Room, Boston Arms (opp Tufnell Park tube), London · 8pm-1am

An exciting night of cabaret, poetry and funky music from the popular reggae/pop band Latin Quarter, the irrepressible Porky the Poet and many more.
For details check music listings or ring 01-354 0844.

AFFILIATION FORM

Please enclose this form with your donations.
I wish to affiliate to the Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign, which will entitle me to receive all NSC mailings, newsletters and publications on the current situation in Nicaragua. (Annual affiliation costs £8 individuals (£4 unwaged); £15 local groups and students groups; £20 local trade unions and CLPs; £60 national organisations.)

I enclose my affiliation fee of £ . . . . . (Cheques payable to Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign.)

Name . . . . . .

Address . . . . . .

. . . . . .

Return to: NICARAGUA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN, 20/21 COMPTON TERRACE, LONDON N1
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